

Andrew Jackson to Emily Donelson, November 28, 1830, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

TO MRS. ANDREW J. DONELSON.¹

¹ *Ibid.*

Washington, November 28, 1830.

Dear Emily, Your kind letter of the 8th ult. has been some days received, and has, owing to the press of business, been laid over for answer until now. I thank you sincerely for this letter, it is the only one I have recd, except one from Mary Eastin; from any of my connections since I left the Hermitage, one from Mr. Mc. Lamore accompanied yours.

I intended my D'r Emily when I sat down to have given you a long friendly answer to your kind favor, but was interrupted in this intention by the receipt of letters from Mr. Caruthers, and others, giving me a detailed account of the disgraceful and unwarrantable course of Genl Desha at Gallatine. The last I saw of him was at my own House where he visited me as a friend, and parted with me as such. I know I had never said or thought harm of him, and any objection to his course, I had freely named to him on his enquiries made of me, and to him alone, and never suspected his friendship, until a few days after he left my house, I was informed by a friend, that he had declared in Gallatine on his return home that he intended to come out against Major Eaton and myself, and what astonished me still more, was the positive falsehood he stated as the ground of his hostility to me. I must confess this sommersett of the Genls. did not much surprise me, for I had cause from my first appointment of Major Eaton to believe, that he was united with the combination, and wielded by the great Political magician who has worked all the political wires in this

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drama, to coerce me to abandon Eaton, and thereby bring on me disgrace for having appointed him, and thereby weaken me in the affections of the nation, and open the way to his perferment on my ruin.

I now clearly see, (as I thought I did from the beginning) in this movement of Deshas, the first public movement under the conspiracy here on the great political chess board. The Nashville letter, the secrete slander whispered as it is said by a certain judge, refered to by the Genl who was an invited gest at the marriage, and whose attendance give the lye direct to the assertion, or is proof of the abominable hypocracy, and baseness of the judge; the antimasonic meetings and the late movements in Philadelphia, begin to unmask themselves and will be fully developed before long, when I must have my Cabinett a unit, when harmony will prevail; and when it will give me pleasure to bring you and your sweet little ones here.

I have suffered much and may suffer much more in feeling, but never can I seperate from my friend without cause. what a wretch he must be who can. "a friend in need is a friend indeed", and he who can forsake his friend in distress, against whom one of the most base and wicked conspiracies have been formed here, under the sanctity of religion to destroy him followed up in Tennessee with a malignity of persecution, against an innocent unoffending man, that none but demons can possess, and in none has this demoniac spirit been more conspicuous than in Genl Desha. His late conduct at Gallatine has set a mark of disgrace upon him that he must feel to his grave, and the pit of disgrace that his imagination had prepared for major Eaton and myself, he has tumbled into. These remarks are founded upon the relation I have before me from mr Caruthers and others that I know to be men of truth, and name it to you that your brother Stockly may be more guarded, or he will get into dificulties, from which danger of disgrace may arise. ["A House divided cannot stand".

I thank you my D'r Emily for the privation you are willing to forego in the seperation from your D'r husband—no one can appreciate more than me such a privation, and none will

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remove it with more pleasure than I will, when it can with propriety be done. I at first my D'r child saw, and with heartfel[t] sorrow regretted that my counsel could not prevent it. I knew the depth of intrigue with which we were surrounded, and the hypocritical cant of friendship and piety, with which it approached innocence, and inexperience, when they would have destroyed any, and every one, who stood in the way of their vengeance, and ambition, but it is done, and ought to be left behind us, and only remembered as a buoy to guard us from quicksands a head. my D'r Emily, I never *desert a friend, without cause; I never will, a friend in distress* , and particularly one who has displayed his acts in so many ways as Eaton has to me, and mine.² If I thought there could be an earthly influence that could induce me to do such a base act, I would despise myself, and be certain that I never could obtain the smiles of my god, whose atributes is, love, charity, and justice; I will write you again as soon as leisure will permit. in the mean time, accept of my prayers for your health and that of your sweet little ones, who I beg you to kiss for me Your D'r Husband is well, but like myself busy. Daniel and Margaret is still here, may leave here next week, my son is here and well, who with yr Andrew, my son, major Lewis mr Earle, all request me, with mary Ann Lewis, to be present[e]d affectionately to you. Please present me to your mother and all enquiring friends. say to mary Easten, with my kind salutations, that she promised to write me, when she visited the garden at the Hermitage to let me know, whether there were sufficient care taken of the shrubery planted by her D'r Aunt in the garden, that I had directed to be planted around her tomb.

² Eaton's disposition to take up his wife's wrongs was manifested in the two letters which he wrote to Mrs. A. J. Donelson, Apr. 8 and 9, 1829, and which are printed, with Donelson's reply, in the foot-note to p. 29, *ante*.

I am affectionately yrs